

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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January 10, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Centennial of the Federal Civil Service System

As one Federal employee to another, I am requesting that you and your agency join me in commemorating the Centennial Anniversary of the establishment of the Federal civil service system in January 1983. Created upon the signing of the Pendleton Act on January 16, 1883, the civil service has been a critically important institution for the preservation of our form of government. In recognition of this historic event, I have proclaimed January 17, 1983, as "Public Employees' Appreciation Day," urging all Americans to join with the members of the civil service system in celebrating this day.

The American civil service system succeeds because of several factors. It is built upon the concept that selection of career civil servants must be based on merit principles, the goal being to hire the most capable and qualified people to do the public's work. It also provides for a vital partnership between political leaders, who bring with them policies and programs endorsed by the electorate, and career civil servants, who provide the expertise and continuity which are essential to the effective operation of a government as large and as varied as ours.

We have planned a series of events during the month of January 1983 to commemorate the Centennial and to draw attention to the accomplishments of the millions of Federal workers who have served their fellow citizens down through the years. Many private groups and associations of Federal employees are also planning events that will be coordinated by the Office of Personnel Management. Your active participation and support will help express our appreciation for the achievements of astronauts and nurses, scientists and park rangers, and diplomats and librarians as well as those in scores of other occupations who have contributed to the essential role the civil service continues to play in ensuring the stability of the world's largest and most successful democracy.

*Ronald Reagan*DCI
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